



## United States Senate

March 12, 2020

The Honorable Michael Pence  
Vice President of the United States of America  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Vice President:

I write with an urgent request that the administration 1) rapidly expand testing capacity to anyone who thinks they may have been exposed to the virus and 2) establish uniform standards for when states and local governments should deploy additional public health measures. Now that we are seeing sustained spread in the United States, unified directions at the federal level are of critical importance.

It has become more and more clear that this disease won't disappear anytime soon, yet testing in the United States lags far behind other nations, many of which can test tens of thousands of people at no cost to the patient.

While it's reported that about 1,300 people in 44 states and Washington, D.C., have tested positive for coronavirus, members of your coronavirus task force estimate that tens of millions of Americans may ultimately become infected. The exponential rise in cases since testing was expanded tells us that we don't yet know the true scope of the virus, in large part because so many Americans are unable to be tested.

In addition to the need for expanded testing, I am very concerned that individuals infected with the coronavirus may not show symptoms for several days, yet are able to infect others. This theory has been supported by research published in the Journal of the American Medical Association and has been publicly acknowledged by members of your task force.

This raises the serious need for federal directives on when and how to implement public health measures. Some states have already implemented their own directives including canceling major events, closing schools, and advising residents to practice social distancing. But these actions have no consistency because they are being decided solely at the local level. Strong federal directives from trusted health institutions such as the CDC and NIH are essential to ensuring local public agencies are armed with effective, consistent strategies to mitigate spread of infection.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to continue working with you on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dianne Feinstein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dianne" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Feinstein".

Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

DF/af